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History of Rocket Launcher Units, 194 Division

1. In October 1951 the Chinese Communist 194 Division assigned two rocket launchers to each infantry company under its command. In February 1952, the division selected about 300 men and gave them a three-week course in the operation of rocket launchers. When this group completed their training, they were divided into three groups and formed into rocket launcher companies. Each was attached to an infantry battalion.

Rocket Launcher Company, 3 Battalion, 580 Regiment

2. The rocket launcher company of the 3 Battalion, 580 Regiment, 194 Division, was in Chungsan-dong (126-38, 37-57) (BT-9202) in late May 1952. The company was divided into three platoons of two squads each and had 113 men. The company was equipped with 12 rocket launchers, and each launcher was provided with 24 rockets. There were two launchers to every squad; each squad numbered 18 men. In April the men of the rocket launcher company were issued gas masks made in Japan in 1937.
3. The primary function of the launchers was to destroy United Nations tanks. The launchers were therefore placed in forward positions, because their effective range was no more than 1 or 2 kilometers.
4. In late May the morale of the rocket launcher company was low because 70 percent of the men had been recently drafted into the Chinese Communist army. Except for officers and Communist Party members, all the men of the company were seeking an opportunity to desert. About 10 percent of the men were afflicted with nyctalopia,¹ and for treatment each man was given a bottle containing 50 grams of cod-liver oil.

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1. Comment. Nyctalopia is night-blindness.

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